



September 2006

DRAFT Minutes of July 25 meeting

HECB Members Present:

Mr. Gene Colin, chair
Mr. Bill Grinstein, vice chair
Mr. Charley Bingham
Ms. Roberta Greene
Sen. Betti Sheldon
Dr. Sam Smith
Mr. Michael Worthy

Welcome and Introductions

Bill Grinstein welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked Grays Harbor College and Laurie Kaye Clary, Vice President of Instruction, for hosting the meeting, and invited her to speak.

Clary said that Grays Harbor College has been in operation for 75 years. In addition to the regular classes it offers on campus, the college serves the community in a variety of ways, including adult basic education, developmental education, and workforce education. It also teaches 500 FTE at the local correctional facility and has outreach centers throughout the region. The college wishes to build a new professional and technical building, a childcare center, and a math and science building.

Executive Session added to the Agenda

Action: **Michael Worthy** moved to amend the day's agenda to include a half-hour executive session for the board to discuss a prospective real estate transaction by the University of Washington. **Roberta Greene** seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Initiatives Proposed by Washington Learns

Debora Merle, higher education policy advisor to the governor, presented in lieu of Ann Daley, WA Learns executive director, who was unable to attend the meeting.

Charley Bingham, member of both the HECB and the steering committee, provided background information about Washington Learns, including its creation, composition, mission, and work plan. Governor Gregoire chairs the steering committee, which includes representatives from the Office of Financial Management (OFM), legislators, and members of the public. By November 2006, the steering committee must submit its final recommendations to the Legislature for improving education in Washington.

Since it might not be financially feasible for the state to act on every one of the report's recommendations, Merle said the Washington Learns Higher Education Advisory Committee has developed five big ideas to improve postsecondary education in the state:

1. Raise overall educational attainment, for example by offering a first year of college for free (referred to as a "13th year").
2. Provide fair, sufficient, and stable funding for higher education.
3. Improve articulation and transfer throughout the system.
4. Improve efficiency, accountability, and governance, for example by creating a P-20 council or dividing the HECB into two separate entities.
5. Increase and sustain research capacity; ensure that Washington stays competitive for federal funds, which increasingly require state matching grants.

Merle said the chair of the project's higher education advisory committee has requested that committee members submit a one-page response to the five big ideas, preferably grouped into three categories: highest priority, lowest priority, and what is missing from the report. Public hearings will be held in September to gather further input on the draft recommendations and how they may be improved.

Comments gathered during the public hearings will be taken into account for the draft report. Merle added that stakeholders—and, in this case, HECB members—are encouraged to submit comments in time for the steering committee's retreat, scheduled for August 9 and 10.

Roberta Greene commented on the report's recommendations regarding tuition-setting authority for the institutions and funding a 13th year for students. Both sound like wonderful concepts, but the state must provide increased financial aid for the high tuition strategy to work. Furthermore, tuition needs to remain relatively stable for the Guaranteed Education Tuition program (GET) to remain actuarially sound. If the recommendations in the report are followed, GET might not remain viable.

Merle suggested that the HECB could provide scenarios of the various options open to GET to help the steering committee make an informed decision on the high tuition/high financial aid proposal. She said GET is a popular and successful program, and all efforts would be made to ensure its continuance; however, some flexibility should be given to institutions regarding tuition-setting.

Sam Smith commented that the Gates Foundation is already engaged in promoting the idea of a 13th year, with positive results, and could potentially help the state in achieving that goal. Merle said she was expecting a report from the Gates Foundation on the matter.

Regarding the proposal to reconstitute the HECB membership, Grinstein said part of the HECB's role is working more closely with the institutions and the Legislature. Its future lies in becoming stronger by meeting its statutory authority; of being flexible so that it can mobilize resources within the framework of accountability and look at system-wide goals as well as institutional goals. Only when system-wide goals have been defined should the composition and breadth of the HECB be evaluated. He said the P-20 council has promise in this period of transition.

Merle said the governor's office will consider the report in writing the budget, and the Legislature will add items and omit others. In spite of the strong economy, people are cautious about taking money away from programs that work to fund programs that have not yet proven to be successful. The governor feels that some elements—such as diversity strategies—are not addressed in the report; therefore, the governor will make additional recommendations to the steering committee in that regard.

Chairman Gene Colin asked Bingham and Sheldon, both of whom sit on Washington Learns committees, if there has been any discussion of public-private partnerships. He said there are many great ideas on how to improve higher education in Washington, but it is now necessary to come up with ideas on how to fund the improvements. For instance, inviting public-private partnerships to fund educational facilities using the model of the early learning center at Bellevue Community College is a working proposition since employers have everything to gain by helping create a well-educated workforce. Bingham replied that the largest effort in building such partnerships has been in early learning.

Sheldon agreed that the real challenge is funding good ideas. For instance, having the state fund a first year of college for every student who wants it is a wonderful idea, but it seems fiscally impossible at the moment. Grinstein said action results from flexibility and responsiveness and he thinks the current four-year lag time between when an idea is funded to when it is implemented is too long.

Merle said the consultant's report includes a strong, non-specific recommendation to increase funding in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, (STEM) through public-private partnerships. She has been working to develop such a partnership between the state and the Washington Education Foundation called "GET Ready for Math and Science." The program will identify seventh-graders who achieve level 4 on the WASL and offer them a full scholarship in a STEM field (funded through GET units) if they stay in level 4.

Speaking from his experience as president of the Talaris Board (one of the largest charitable organizations in the state), Sam Smith said that if institutions and the state want to engage in public-private partnerships, they must be highly focused because there are already major groups soliciting private funds. Private entities would be more amenable to funding two or three specific pilot projects than they would higher education in general. Smith stressed that it is also important to allow private entities some control over the projects they help pay for.

Merle agreed with Smith, saying that the "GET Ready for Math and Science" project was designed specifically because employers have been having difficulty hiring qualified graduates

in the STEM areas. Viewed from that context, the partnership would have little difficulty raising private funds for the project.

Minutes of May 25th board meeting approved

Action: **Sam Smith** moved to approve the minutes of the board's May meeting; **Betti Sheldon** seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

UW Ph.D. in Rehabilitation Science Approved

Action: **Mike Worthy** moved to approve the Ph.D. in Rehabilitation Science at the University of Washington (Res. 06-15); **Roberta Greene** seconded the motion. The program was unanimously approved.

Pilot Baccalaureate Programs at Community Colleges Approved

Colin prefaced the discussion with an assurance that the four pilot baccalaureate programs under consideration had met all the requirements under the board's review process for proposed new degree programs. However, because the board's education committee had expressed some concern regarding the HECB's fiduciary responsibilities with regard to the programs, representatives from the two-year system were on hand to provide more detail and clarity to the proposals.

Charlie Earl, executive director of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), and David Mitchell, president of Olympic College, joined the meeting via phone conference. Earl said the SBCTC board was unanimous in selecting the colleges that would participate in the pilot program. The SBCTC is committed to work in partnership with the HECB in ensuring that the proposed programs and all subsequent applied baccalaureate programs offered at community and technical colleges meet the criteria set by the HECB. He said two-year institutions offering applied baccalaureates will continue to be part of the community and technical college system but will be under the purview of the HECB in matters regarding baccalaureate program approvals. He added that if the governance system were to change, all interested parties would be involved in the process; however, the SBCTC is committed to the existing arrangement for the present.

Mitchell, who is also a member of the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NAC), stated that, in his opinion, the colleges are well-positioned to move forward. Community colleges in other states have begun offering applied baccalaureates in recent years, so there is a system in place for evaluating the proposed programs. Moreover, high standards in terms of student protection and quality are required in the process. Describing the accreditation process in more detail, he said that the first step toward accreditation is candidacy; no student will be allowed to enroll in the

program until the institution has been approved for candidacy status. The commission evaluates the program and accredits it (or not) at the same time as the first cohort of students graduates. The commission looks not only at the program, but at the school as a whole.

Jean Floten, president of Bellevue Community College (BCC), and Tom Keegan, president of Peninsula College, presented more detail at the meeting. Floten discussed the financial stability and viability of the proposed programs. The Legislature has allotted \$100,000 for each pilot program in addition to each institution's annual FTE allocation. The allocated funds will allow the institutions to develop the curriculum, meet the requirements of a baccalaureate degree, and provide a qualified and well-prepared faculty. In writing the budget for the pilot programs, the institutions considered additional factors such as expanded advising responsibilities, credentialing requirements, upper-division transfer credits, and student services.

Colin asked the two-year officials to report back in one year with an update on the pilot programs.

Action: **Sam Smith** moved to approve the pilot baccalaureate programs at community colleges (Resolutions 06-17, 06-18, 06-19, 06-20); **Betti Sheldon** seconded the motion. The programs—B.S. in Nursing at Olympic College, B.A.S. in Hospitality Management at South Seattle Community College, B.S. in Applied Management at Peninsula College, and B.A.S. in Radiation and Imaging Sciences at Bellevue Community College—were unanimously approved.

Report of the Fiscal Committee

2007-09 HECB Agency Budget Request Approved

Joann Wiszmann, HECB deputy director, summarized the process used for determining the agency budget. Using the goals and initiatives of the master plan as a starting point, budget requests were categorized into four priority areas:

- Ensuring affordability and access
- Responding to state program needs
- Improving efficiency and accountability
- Increasing agency effectiveness

Worthy said prioritizing the budget is an excellent idea, since top-priority items will be more likely to get funding in the event the Legislature does not choose to grant 100 percent of the agency budget request.

The top-priority budget items for each of the four priority areas include: expanding the State Need Grant program; stabilizing GEAR UP scholarships awarded under the previous grant; implementing a statewide student advising system; and, providing TIAA-CREF benefits to HECB employees.

Bingham inquired if there is a way to quantitatively illustrate how the lack of TIAA-CREF is adversely affecting agency recruitment and retention. Wiszmann replied that there have been several instances in which selected candidates turned down an offer to work at the HECB because benefits were better elsewhere. This was true of the last three national searches the agency undertook.

Regarding data-driven policy development and improving accountability, Worthy asked if that budget item would allow the HECB to access more data, as well as more effectively use the data it now has. Wiszmann said the HECB has been able to access data collected by the Office of Financial Management (OFM). It recently has gained access to new data that could help increase effectiveness and accountability. This item would also help the HECB determine what data it still needs.

Bingham said he would like the intent to increase graduation rates to be more apparent in the budget. Grinstein asked Wiszmann to keep the Executive Committee up to date on changes in cost estimates as they become available.

Action: **Mike Worthy** moved to approve the HECB's agency budget proposal for the 2007-09 biennium (Res. 06-21); **Roberta Greene** seconded the motion. The resolution was unanimously approved.

2007-09 Higher Education Operating Budget Recommendations – Budget Development Approach

In an effort to link institutions' budget proposals to the strategic master plan, the fiscal committee has identified four statewide operating budget priorities, which relate to the goals of the master plan. Additionally, two different funding levels have been established.

Fiscal policy staff Holly Lynde and Kathy Raudenbush summarized the provisions under the new approach. The four priorities for the biennium include:

- Ensuring affordability and access for students
- Responding to state and regional program needs
- Maintaining academic quality
- Promoting institutional excellence and accountability

The two funding levels are:

- Enhancing quality, access, and the state's competitiveness
- Building a foundation for excellence

While the priorities are important, Bingham said he wanted to be sure that each budget item means more students would be graduating, moving up, or finding employment. In short, he wanted to see the outcomes expectations of the budget recommendations. Worthy said it is

possible to draw a statistical link between funding an FTE and the probability of graduating another student. The HECB is working on strengthening that link.

Grinstein reminded that the role of research is discussed in the strategic master plan. He suggested that it should be determined if it is appropriate to deal with research specifically (other agencies are already working on it) or if it should be left out of the current budget. He also suggested changing the budget matrix to give various elements a column to themselves, realizing that some of the elements will cover several objectives.

Report of the Financial Aid Committee

State Need Grant and State Work Study Rules Changes Approved

Roberta Greene introduced the financial aid discussions. John Klacik, HECB director of student financial assistance, presented the proposed rules changes for the State Need Grant (SNG) and State Work Study (SWS) programs. Rules changes would:

- Establish the board's guidance for the less-than-half-time pilot program authorized by the Legislature last year. Through this program students taking four or five credits at nine schools in the state receive one quarter of the maximum full-time SNG award, and less-than-half-time students do not have to enroll in a degree program for up to one year.
- Give former foster youth funding priority in the SNG and the SWS programs.

In addition to the changes above, the board will be asked to consider approving another rules change at its December meeting, whereby students enrolled in an applied baccalaureate program at a two-year institution will receive the SNG at a rate commensurate with the tuition (which will be at the level of four-year regional institutions).

Action: **Roberta Greene** moved to approve the proposed rules changes for the SNG and SWS programs (Res. 06-22); **Sam Smith** seconded the motion. The resolution was unanimously approved.

GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) Program Update

Klacik and Weiya Liang, associate director for GEAR UP, provided an overview of the successful first and second GEAR UP grant cycles. The program helps produce more bachelor's degrees and reduces time-to-degree for low-income students, often of ethnic minorities. The program is federally funded, but requires dollar-for-dollar matching by the state. GEAR UP students and their parents enter the program in seventh grade, and may receive tutoring and mentoring, participate in after-school and summer programs, and receive assistance in selecting colleges and applying for admission. They receive scholarships to attend the Washington institution of their choice. The success of the program is most evident in the numbers: 73

percent of GEAR UP graduates attend college, compared to 57 percent of high school graduates statewide. Expanding GEAR UP funding would allow the program to extend outreach services and early intervention.

Bingham asked if school districts and individuals selected to participate in the GEAR UP program are representative of the state in terms of average income. Liang replied that school districts must meet the following criteria to be invited to submit a request for proposals:

- More than 50 percent of the student body participates in the free- or reduced-lunch program.
- The school is not already receiving services such as TRIO or GEAR UP.

Furthermore, participating students must be on the free or reduced lunch list, or the student's family must participate in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

Colin noted that for programs such as GEAR UP, parental outreach is the foundation for success. He expressed concern for parents who do not know what steps to take to send their children to college. Klacik assured Colin that GEAR UP requires parental involvement and teacher professional development and has long-term benefits in the community.

Grinstein asked about the possibility of working with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to extend the GEAR UP model. Liang replied that GEAR UP is currently collaborating with OSPI in gathering data, designing curricula, and selecting school districts.

Bingham stated that a program such as GEAR UP should extend to all school districts in the state, not just twelve. Any student who wants to go to college should go, regardless of income. Scholarship support must be flexible enough that everybody who wants to graduate should get the support they need.

Grinstein asked if providing information about existing scholarship opportunities is part of the process. Klacik replied that the program targets the neediest, hardest to reach, and most eligible students in the state. These students typically do not aspire to go to college and do not apply.

Smith noted that the Washington Education Foundation (WEF), through the Achievers' Program and the Higher Education Readiness Opportunities program (HERO), has provided more money than the state to pre-college readiness programs.

University of Washington off-campus property acquisition approved

In accordance with the provisions of RCW 42.30.110, the board held an executive session from 11:30-12:00 to consider a prospective real estate transaction by the University of Washington. Under state law, off-campus property acquisitions by the state's public colleges and universities require HECB approval.

The board voted on the proposed property acquisition during the open portion of its meeting.

Action: **Mike Worthy** moved to approve UW's off-campus property acquisition (Res. 06-23); **Sam Smith** seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Report of the Executive Director

Sulton briefed the board on the following activities and initiatives:

- The Commission on the Future of Higher Education has released the second draft of its report on developing a comprehensive national strategy for postsecondary education. Some of the recommendations are issues that Washington is already addressing, such as: improving data collection; reducing the need for remedial coursework in college; easing the student transfer process; and, creating a new accountability system.
- The HECB has awarded State Work Study "Incentive Grants" to ten institutions. Ranging from \$3,000 to \$5,000, the awards will strengthen the SWS program at the campus level.
- The HECB has introduced a pilot program called WAFAX, or Washington Financial Aid Exchange, to help institutions process financial aid for students who are enrolled in two institutions at the same time. WAFAX was created using Qwest settlement funds awarded by the K-20 Network Board. The system will be implemented this fall.
- Governor Gregoire awarded 118 scholarships to help emancipated foster youth go to college.

Report of the Education Committee

The Education Committee has met twice to discuss the day's agenda items, education chair Sam Smith said. The committee reviewed reports on diversity in higher education, online student advising, and the role and mission of higher education in Washington.

"Diversity in Washington Higher Education"

Sulton said the draft report "Diversity in Washington Higher Education" is intended to be comprehensive in scope and is a work in progress. Conversations with stakeholders will continue to take place in the coming weeks through focused meetings and public forums around the state. In September the final report will be brought back to the board for further discussion and possible adoption.

Using data from a wide range of sources, the report attempts to track the movements of students belonging to ethnic minorities throughout the Washington higher education system. In spite of increases in the enrollment of minority students, there are still challenges to diversity in Washington.

Strategies for enhancing diversity include:

- Increasing efforts at the pre-collegiate level

- Helping students succeed in college, looking at programs that work
- Increasing faculty diversity
- Promoting systemic change

Bingham asked about the next steps in the process. He suggested that a conversation between HECB staff and representatives from the institutions to spotlight achievements would help energize people to continue in their efforts toward a diverse system in Washington.

Sulton said EWU has invited the HECB to hold a forum in Cheney. The report will undergo many changes as these types of conversations take place. Input is also needed from the faculty and state ethnic commissions. Regarding energizing the process, the report includes a list of practices that work. However, Sulton reminded, it is important to note that there is no system-wide practice that works. This is Washington's opportunity to develop one.

Bingham inquired whether the HECB should be using income and social strata rather than ethnicity in order to better understand the problem. Sulton replied that he personally feels it is important to use ethnicity. Grinstein added that it will ultimately be necessary to look at both income and ethnicity, since the financial aid system will have to be redesigned to match the needs of students according to both factors.

Greene stated that while it is necessary to look at income, the focus must remain on the diversity aspect of the conversation. There are some difficult conversations that need to happen, research on diversity that needs to be done, and recommendations that need to be presented to the state. There are disincentives for children of color to attend college; these need to be exposed and counterbalanced with incentives. If the participation of people of color in higher education mirrored their presence in the state, Washington would gain a significant economic advantage and improve its civic environment. Above all, she said, we must be known as a state that values diversity.

Sulton said one step in the right direction is determining how the report works with existing diversity plans at the campus level. He added that the recommendations in the report are costly, but the consequences of not acting on the recommendations could cost more.

Master of Science in Real Estate at the University of Washington Approved

Randy Spaulding, acting director of academic affairs, provided background and process information on UW's proposed M.S. in Real Estate program.

Jim DeLisle, Runstad professor of real estate, urban planning and design at UW, cited four key elements that the program would address.

1. Employer demand - Because of the increasing complexity of the market, businesses have difficulty finding qualified employees who are able to conduct more rigorous analysis and interdisciplinary problem-solving.
2. Student demand - Existing programs are overwhelmed, accepting 20-30 students a year out of 90 qualified students.

3. Funding - The state has committed funding for the first core group of 20 students and UW will increase funding as the program grows to 40 students. These supplemental funds are permanent; the program will therefore be able to recruit tenure-track faculty, ensuring the legacy of the program.
4. Sustainability - Industry experts and peer institutions agree that as high as it currently is, demand will increase over time.

Industry representatives described employer needs and the benefits that the M.S. in Real Estate program would bring to the community.

- Larry Remmers, senior vice president at Wells Fargo Bank/Real Estate Group and a founding member of UW's Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies: Remmers said real estate business is becoming more sophisticated, requiring an increasing amount of expertise. Instead of training apprentices as has been traditionally done in this field, Wells Fargo has been recruiting graduates of the Runstad Center because they have proven to be knowledgeable in the business. The proposed MS in Real Estate will help produce the type of qualified employees that his company needs.
- Mike Makar, managing director for CBRE/Melody, the world's largest real estate services company: Makar agreed that UW's Runstad Center graduates are more qualified than graduates of other programs; however, it still doesn't provide the level of training that his firm would like to see in its new hires. He said an MS in Real Estate would help fill that need.
- Kelly Price, CFO for CamWest Development, one of the largest residential developers in the state of Washington: Having seen new hires struggle as they enter the field, Price sees a definite need for a program that would produce graduates with knowledge of project management, an understanding of finance and capital markets, environmental and transportation issues, and an understanding of land-use issues as they relate to the Northwest.

Action: **Sam Smith** moved to approve the M.S. in Real Estate at the University of Washington (Res. 06-16); **Bill Grinstein** seconded the motion. The resolution was unanimously approved.

Statewide role and mission for higher education

The higher education infrastructure is undergoing major changes, most of which are happening with no central organizing mechanism. Spaulding said a statewide role and mission for higher education would provide a policy-driven framework for future expansion, and would help eliminate program overlap and inefficiencies.

Sam Smith agreed noting that, since 2005 alone, Washington has gone from six to 14 public institutions providing four years of baccalaureate degree coursework, with more growth seen in

the coming years. He said a statewide role and mission would certainly help the HECB and the state grow in a more focused direction.

Grinstein asked if the framework for future expansion will be adequate to guide program proposals from the institutions. Spaulding said it should be considered one of a set of tools (regional needs assessment would be another) to help with academic planning. Grinstein asked to what extent regional assessment is instructive to the institutions. Spaulding said each institution has its own way of responding to regional needs, and the response tends to be included in their mission statements. Furthermore, some institutions are required by statute to serve the region, while others are not.

Bingham suggested that a longer-term picture—at least ten years—would help the board understand the needs of the state in a number of areas, especially in terms of working with institutions to craft role and mission statements. He noted that students are missing from the mission statement, and should be included.

Staff will engage in a dialogue with public institutions and stakeholders to draft a statewide role and mission statement. The draft statement will be submitted to the board for adoption at its December meeting.

Online Student Advising Pilot Project

The HECB has been awarded \$225,000 of residual funding from the Qwest settlement to pilot an online advising system that would enable students at any community college to explore degree programs at any baccalaureate institution in the state through one Web site. Peggi Munkittrick, Lin Zhou, and David Stanley of AcademyOne, the HECB's private-sector partner for this venture, demonstrated the capabilities of the system.

Course Atlas is an online, searchable database of courses and equivalencies. It has two different interfaces—one for the institution and one for the student—which are designed to meet the needs of the users. Course equivalencies are determined by the institutions. While the institutions have the option to use common course numbering, the database doesn't require it, and even renders it moot.

Sulton said that this type of project is perfectly aligned with the strategic master plan and a positive step for the state.

Biennial review of academic enrollments, programs and locations

In September 2005, the board adopted a revised framework for: approving new degree programs; creating off-campus teaching sites and centers; and, assessment and reporting requirements for new and existing programs offered by the six public baccalaureate institutions.

During the board's meeting in July, staff presented the proposed classification of existing off-campus instructional locations as teaching sites and centers. Staff also summarized programs

approved, name changes, reclassifications, and programs eliminated in the past two years. The classification system includes the following:

- Teaching site: Would enroll fewer than 150 students in no more than three distinct degree programs.
- Center: Would enroll between 150 and 1,500 students in two or more distinct degree programs; would provide more extensive on-site services and resources than a teaching site.
- Branch and system campuses: Operated by a public four-year institution. Examples are UW Tacoma and Bothell and WSU Spokane and Tri-Cities.

Implementing a classification system and using it in tandem with the *Program and Facility Approval Policies and Procedures* would help the HECB manage the growth of higher education, thereby helping create a more efficient system.

Grinstein asked to what extent lower-division coursework is designed to meet degree production in a center or site. Spaulding replied that WAFAX will be a crucial tool because there will be an increase in co-enrollment agreements. It would also help to integrate upper- and lower-division coursework.

Bingham asked if such a system would increase degree production, in which fields, and what types of degree. There is currently no data to answer that question.

Public Comment

Jane Sherman, associate vice provost for academic affairs at Washington State University, stated that the online advising pilot project could be one of the best things to happen in Washington higher education; however, some concerns need to be addressed. The pilot advising project as it is currently presented is a course-by-course equivalency program; the state's policy is to work on a degree-by-degree basis. Many existing degrees allow students to transfer smoothly to all the public and most of the private institutions in Washington. Sherman said the concern is that the advising project would push aside existing degree transfer agreements.

Another issue with the online advising system is that many programs are in high demand and therefore very competitive. Ana Mari Cauce, UW executive vice provost and professor of psychology, cautioned that completing all necessary equivalencies does not necessarily mean the student will get accepted in a specific program. The concern is that students who do not do well will not be advised early on to enter a different field.

Debbie Johnson, associate director for information systems, said that in addition to the pilot advising systems, focus groups are being put together to help gather this type of information from institutions. The system would allow students to choose among institutions as well as among majors.

On another matter, Sherman suggested the board should increase the overall priority level given to TIAA-CREF in the agency budget proposal. Adding TIAA-CREF to HECB employees'

benefits package would give the agency the leverage it needs to hire the best candidates, which would in turn benefit the Washington higher education system as a whole.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.